



A TOOL FOR PARENTS

BIG CHANGES, SAFE TALKS

An interactive tool to work through together

How to use this tool

Pages 1 and 2 have questions for your child to reflect on and answer (as much as they feel comfortable doing so). You can then talk through their answers.

Page 3 includes lists you can complete together.

Page 4 has some top tips for parents.

Starting the conversation

“I want to talk to you about something important. We are going to be leaving the military. Some things might change, but we will figure it out together.”

ASK ME ANYTHING

Write out any questions you have for your parent:

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THIS CHANGE?



ONE WORRY I HAVE IS...

ONE THING I AM EXCITED ABOUT IS...

WHAT STAYS THE SAME

Add more together

- ☐ Your family loves you
- ☐ You are not alone through this change
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

MAKE A PLAN TOGETHER

Tick suggestions, or add new ones

LET'S STAY CONNECTED:

- ☐ Movie night
- ☐ Take a walk together
- ☐ Cook together
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

I CAN HELP YOU BY:

- ☐ Talking with you
- ☐ Including you in decisions about you
- ☐ Answering your questions as best I can
- ☐ Helping plan new routines
- ☐
- ☐

GET SUPPORT

Scan this code to access Forces Children Scotland's support, information and tools for children from Armed Forces families (including those who leave the Forces).



TOP TIPS FOR PARENTS, FROM RUBY BOOTS PARENTS

Give them time

Even if your child seems excited or says they're fine, they may still be processing a huge amount of change. Make time to listen, talk and check in — even when life feels hectic.

Don't assume they'll feel the same as you

Your excitement, worries or relief about leaving the Forces might be very different from theirs. Give them space to have their own feelings about the change.

Let them find their own way

Children can respond very differently. One might want to make friends immediately; another might keep everyone at arm's length. Try not to worry if their approach is different from what you expected.

Try new things together

Civilian life can bring new opportunities — clubs, activities, sports, hobbies and friendships. It can take time and effort to get involved, but trying different things can help your child discover what they enjoy.

Use support when you need it

You don't have to work it all out yourself. Resources, schools, other parents and organisations such as Ruby Boots can help you and your children navigate the transition.



Illustration by Kemu Kedrayate